ENCLOSURE FROM GUATEMALA

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AIR POUCH

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA — 283 (DESP. NO.)

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON — October 30, 1957 (DATE)

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Gonzalez Juarez have come out of hiding and others have returned to the country clandestinely. The communists are operating more openly than before. It is not clear yet which ones are back in the country. There are many rumors that big name communists like Carlos Manuel PELLECER and Victor Manuel GUTIERREZ are in town but the Embassy has been unable to confirm this. It is difficult to name names at this time but we are actively seeking more information and will try to send some concrete data up to the Department within the next few days.

In a press conference yesterday Provisional President Guillermo FLORES AVENDAÑO said that exiles whose cases do not fall within Transitory Article 6 of the Constitution will be permitted to return in accordance with the law. Transitory Article 6 in effect gives the Executive the authority to deny entry to communists who left the country prior to the date the new Constitution became effective (March 1, 1956).

Some of the alarm shown by anti-communists these days derives from the fact that the "Liberation Movement" which threw out the communist dominated Arbenz regime has lost most of its influence in the Government after having controlled it for upwards of three years. Many people fear this may mean a return to a government which is tolerant of communism.

The present provisional government appears to be anti-communist. President Flores Avendaño, one of the few "Liberationists" still occupying positions of authority in the Administration, is an anti-communist. Minister of Defense Lorenzana has expressed his opposition to communism to the Ambassador and other Embassy officers. Foreign Minister Adolfo MOLINA Orantes, when Dean of the Law School, frequently stated privately his concern at communist influence in the University. The Congress is almost 100% anti-communist.

On the other hand, the present Government does appear somewhat more liberal in its orientation than was the "Liberation Government." This is reflected in the widespread feeling within Administration circles that the PR should be allowed to register.

The communist danger today lies principally in the circumstance that communists have infiltrated and may be able eventually substantially to influence the PR. The PR in turn now has the prospect of being able to obtain a voice in Government through the electoral process. With the Vigoristas weakened, the anti-communists split and the Government machinery, for the time being at least, inaccessible to any political parties, the PR is in a much more favorable position than it would have been had it been allowed to participate in the October 20 elections. There is no reasonable prospect that the position of the Communist Party itself as a relatively ineffective clandestine organization will be substantially altered, at least under the present provisional Government.

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In accordance with the Department's instructions, the Embassy will give priority attention in its reporting to the communist problem vis-à-vis the present crisis and will continue to do all it can to discourage the emergence of any Government in Guatemala with the slightest communist taint.

For the Ambassador:

William B. Connett, Jr.
First Secretary of Embassy

Department please pass copies of this despatch to the Central American Missions, Mexico and Panama

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